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QUARTERLY JOURNAL
OF THE
STATISTICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

MAY, 1849.

Fifteenth Annual Report of the Statistical Society of London.
Session 1848-9.

"STATISTICS," observes one of their most eminent cultivators, "have made great and useful progress during the last twenty years. They have become parliamentary in England and France, classic and popular in Germany, and administrative in every civilized country. Everything favours the anticipation that they will continue to increase in vigour and productiveness; but it must not be concealed that their advancement is closely allied with the peaceful progress of the nations. The first cannon-shots fired in Europe will be the signal for closing their operations; and false inductions, chance, and presumption will again assume the place, which they so long occupied, of any reasonable appeal to numbers." Scarcely had these words been penned and published, when the signal was given, and presumptions sufficiently daring in social science, were let loose, in avowed scorn of all experience. But happily the writer had underrated the strength and prevalence of that same dread of either organized or anarchical barbarism which induced him to draw so mournful a horoscope for statistics; since it has served to hurl aside the baseless fabrics of social system-makers of every school, and since in avowing its determination rather to interrogate facts, has done express homage to Statistics.

It is to be hoped, however, that this advanced position in the public regard will not induce our fellow-statists to assume a position, as teachers, to which they have no genuine claim. We are employed in narrowing the circle within which the final truths must lie, rather than in an attempt at once to seize them, in which we should fail, to the loss of that credit which is really due to our exertions. Legitimately to bring Statistics into a very intimate relation with the moral sciences which are based upon postulates derived from the observation of individual character and circumstances, will require the long and arduous labour of many minds, and a most discreet patience, to refrain from using the results of that labour merely to decorate a favourite assumption. These results, however, may always be stated in a manner easy of conception, so as to be available to all who may have occasion to consult them, as well as to the man of science; but such an end can be attained only by the adoption of a regular and well considered method, alternately synthetical and analytical, enabling us to arrange, combine, and divide each body of numerical data in turn, and exhibit them luminously in the natural order of their more intimate association. "The important part in such a labour which necessarily belongs to a sound logic, shows at once how it is possible to be a very able calculator

and yet but a second-rate statist, since, to reach the heights of any science, the first of all qualifications is a just and penetrating spirit*."

Man in society is the subject of our study; to detect the influences which bear upon his welfare, our ultimate aim; inductive reasoning from phenomena observable and observed with mathematical precision, our method; and to make use of all evidence of this character which may be turned up in the daily working of society, as well as to collect new data, our necessity. Hence, while statesmanship and government are equally beyond our region, we may be as useful in supplying evidence to aid the legislatorial labours of the former as we are necessarily dependent upon the administrative operations of the latter for much of our evidence. In continental nations, therefore, we see the cultivation of statistics chiefly devolved upon Royal Commissions; while it is eminently in the genius of our own that we should continue to maintain our existence separate from that of every administrative department, though it is well known to our neighbours how many men of ability in most of them, as well as men of practical skill in public affairs and the higher commerce of the country, are numbered among our Fellows. The prevalence of such classes in England, says M. Moreau de Jonnès, in terms perhaps too flattering, explains "why the Statistical Society of London comprises a greater number of men distinguished for their knowledge and useful labours than can be assembled in any other country of Europe."

Maintaining, as we do, a direct and highly valued intercourse with the Continental Statistical Commissions, and always reserving the freedom of our own position, it is therefore with pleasure that the Council avails itself of the opportunity of echoing the sentiment expressed by the head of the Statistical Department attached to the French Ministry of Commerce, that the general institution of official statistical departments would render great service to European society, and to the several States of which it is composed. In making known the natural, agricultural, and manufacturing produce of each country, it would guide and extend international commerce. By proving numerically the happy effects of such or such a measure of economical legislation, it would teach the trustees of power the superiority which may be acquired by the prompt imitation of nations the most advanced in agriculture, in manufactures, and even in the manual perfection of the arts and trades. In collecting the numerical terms which would enable us to compare the different states of Europe with each other, it would dissipate a multitude of prejudices and misconceptions; and the example of success attending upon the perseverance of some nations apparently very ill-circumstanced to achieve it, would perhaps prove to the others how inane is that national vanity which persuades each that it is the prototype of human intelligence.

All the principal States of Europe have now, indeed, their central offices of Statistics in imitation of our own, instituted in 1832 by the late Earl of Auckland, when President of the Board of Trade, and confided from the first to Mr. Porter, whose earliest labours gave that decisive evidence of the value of such a department, which led to the immediate erection of the Bureau de la Statistique Générale de la France, which has ever since been under the able management of our honorary coadjutor, M. Moreau de Jonnès. It is in Belgium, however, that we now see the most complete organisation for statistical investiga-

* M. Moreau de Jonnès, *Essai sur la Statistique*, pp. 49—50.

tion, in the Central Commission of Statistics, at Brussels, under the presidency of M. Quetelet, with its affiliated Commissions in every province. The published bulletins of its proceedings and labours bear high testimony to the wisdom of its arrangements and the zeal of its members; and the general plan here elaborated has been adopted by the Sardinian Government, on whose part the Sardinian Minister has done us the honour to ask an interchange of publications with the new Commission.

The names of our distinguished fellow-labourers, scattered through all the capitals of Europe, present a great temptation to trespass beyond the limits which you can accord; and refraining from even a brief notice of their recent labours, we must confine ourselves to the few works of national magnitude which demand our especial regard and imitation. Such, for instance, is the *Statistique de l'Agriculture de la France*, forming four volumes of the series published by the Bureau de la *Statistique Générale de la France*, and the result of six years' labour, aided by the whole administrative agency of every department. It embraces the results of an official enquiry made in each of the 37,300 communes of France, in which the quantity and value of rural produce of every kind has been brought to account, on a system of classification of which the following is the outline, now filled up, and representing the former as well as the present condition of the country in respect to:—

1. The surface occupied by each kind of crop.
2. The quantity and value of the seed.
3. Its produce, in the gross, and by hectare.
4. The prices of this produce, in departments, and in the gross.
5. The consumption of agricultural produce by locality, per head, and in the kingdom at large.

6. The trade in this produce, both internal and external.

And under these several heads are separately considered:—

1. The cereal crops, in gross, and severally.
2. The vine and its produce, in wine and brandy.
3. Miscellaneous crops, for food, for the raw materials of manufactures, and in gardens.
4. Grass lands, under the several divisions of natural meadow, artificial meadow, pasture, and heath.
5. Crown woods and forests, whether held by the State or by individuals.

6. And, in a final summary, the cultivation and produce of the land generally, as it now exists, and as it was at different memorable epochs of the country's history.

A second part considers the domestic animals reared in husbandry, their numbers stated by kind, sex, age, and locality; their value, the returns which they afford, the number and price of those killed for consumption, with their gross and net weight, and the quantity of each kind of meat consumed by each inhabitant for each arrondissement and each department of the realm.

This enormous work is closed by a recapitulation of the different branches of produce and the mean returns which they afford; and the totals represent the actual territorial wealth of the country at large; a result which has been sought by economists and statisticians for centuries, but to which it was impossible to attain without the long and difficult investigation, the successful completion of which demonstrates the practicability of determining, by legitimate methods, the rural produce of a country of no less than 130 millions of acres. This example, we

trust, will not be lost to ourselves; and an opportunity of realizing, to some extent, an analogous work, is presented by the approaching period for making the decennial census of the population, on the recurrence of which, when a good system has once been established, it might economically be revised.

The formation of a Statistical Department at the East India House has led to the institution of a more minute and careful research into the state of India than has hitherto been made. The attention of the department has hitherto been chiefly devoted to the Presidency of Bombay, with regard to which a mass of valuable information has been collected from a variety of sources, and brought together so as to be readily available for reference. Until now the extent of the foreign trade, even of Bombay itself, was never ascertained with precision; the insular situation of the chief port having led to mistakes seriously impairing the accuracy and trustworthiness of the returns. From the present statistical survey, however, we learn that the value of the commerce of Bombay by sea (imports and exports) for the year 1845-6, was no less than 22,43,19,974rs. (2,243,199*l.* sterling); but in this sum is comprised not only the value of the trade with ports situated beyond the continent of India, but also that of the trade carried on with Calcutta and Madras, and other places on that continent, not excepting even the subordinate ports of the Bombay Presidency. To obtain a correct view of the subject it is consequently necessary to separate the total amount into its two great constituent parts of Foreign and Home Trade, which is accordingly done by a table in which the respective amounts of merchandize and treasure are distinguished, and the fluctuations of trade illustrated by extending the view over a series of years, commencing with 1834-5. The subject is further illustrated by a series of tables penetrating into each several branch of commerce, including the imports and exports of bullion; and by others, illustrating the progress of the cotton trade, which is a subject of peculiar interest to the mother country. Great exertions have, for several years past, been made, both to extend the cultivation and improve the quality of the article produced. In 1846, a Committee was appointed at Bombay to investigate the condition of the trade; and the results of these researches were embodied in a Report affording much information, both on its past and present state.

The population of the British territory within the Presidency of Bombay was, in 1838, the subject of an enquiry instituted by the Indian Law Commission. Information was called for, in the judicial department, and the returns of the various collectorates form a very valuable document, giving a total of 7,723,649. A return of the educational institutions of the region distinguishes between the Vernacular Schools, in which elementary instruction is conveyed through the medium of the native languages, and all those institutions in which the English tongue and the literature and sciences of Europe are imparted; the number of the former being 132, containing 7,765 pupils. Elaborate returns, showing the progress of civil and criminal justice, and affording strong presumptive evidence, not only of the celerity but of the goodness of the procedure, are included in the body of facts thus transmitted to the Home Government; and we yet hope that the permission of the Directors to the communication of a selected portion of it to this Society, will be obtained by our Vice-President, Colonel Sykes.

At the Eighteenth Meeting of the British Association for the advancement of Science, held at Swansea, August 9th—16th, 1848, the Statistical Section enjoyed the advantage of the Presidency of J. H. Vivian, Esq., M.P., whose zealous attention to the interests of the Section deserves the special acknowledgment of its members, as much as the frank liberality with which he led the hospitality shown, on that occasion, to the Members of the Association generally, obtained their unanimous regard. The Section was well supported throughout; and among the papers produced, which have already or which will shortly be laid before you, in the pages of our Journal, may especially be mentioned the "Statistics of Civil Justice in Bengal," by Colonel Sykes; the "Progress of the Railway System in Great Britain," by Wyndham Harding, Esq.; the "Mendicity Statistics of the Metropolis," by Sir J. P. Boileau, Bart.; "Observations on the means of maintaining Troops in Health in the Madras Army," by Edward Balfour, Esq.; "Vital Statistics of Java," by John Crawford, Esq., with an introduction by Colonel Sykes; "Vital Statistics of Calcutta," by Dr. C. Finch; and "Statistical Evidence to the Quality of Popular Education in England and Wales," as also "Statistics of Brittany and the Bretons," by Joseph Fletcher, Esq.

Among the papers which have been put on record in your Journal during the past year, the "Report of an Investigation into the State of the Poorer Classes of St. George's in the East," originating in a donation for this purpose by Mr. Hallam, and conducted by a Committee of the Council, is worthy of a special mention, as the most complete and elaborate of its kind which has yet been executed, independent of the social features of general interest which it reveals, and which may fairly be assumed to be those of the great mass of our urban population of the labouring classes, above the utterly destitute and abandoned. The various aspects of good and evil which it presents offer a field of serious study to the statesman and philanthropist, for the homes into which we have here penetrated are undoubtedly the sources of great social happiness, or of public evils, which may, perhaps, be greatly modified at the fountain-head, but can seldom be stanchd by direct applications in the localities where vice, misery, and disease sink to their final depths. Neither should we omit to notice the valuable paper of the Earl of Lovelace, based on the data of Messrs. Mounier and Rubichon, reinvestigating a subject of great social interest (that of the "Subdivision of Real Property in France") which had already been introduced to us in the facts of M. Passy, by Sir John P. Boileau, Bart., and is not yet exhausted; nor the paper, now in the press, by Mr. Farr, on the institutions of providence for the large classes of persons engaged in the civil service, which will be found materially to advance one of the most important branches of applied statistics.

The number of elections of Fellows and withdrawals from the Society during the past year, precisely balance each other, and the usual balance sheet is annexed; showing, on the actual receipts and assets, as compared with the actual expenditure and liabilities, a balance of about 20% in favour of the Society, as compared with the state of its finances at the close of the preceding year; with a larger recoverable arrear of subscriptions.

Abstract of RECEIPTS and EXPENDITURE from the 1st JANUARY to the 31st DECEMBER, 1848.

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